

It's Smart To Be Gallery Wise!

THE WILLIAM ROCKHILL NELSON GALLERY OF ART

AND ATKINS MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

N E W SF L A S H E S

January 1 - 16,

1 9 3 6

EXHIBITION OF SOVIET PAINTING: The Loan Exhibition for the month of January at the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art and Atkins Museum will, from the point of view of contemporary art, be one of the most interesting of the season. Assembled in Soviet Russia by the Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, it gives us the first opportunity to see what has been produced in painting and graphic art in Russia since the great political revolution.

The Exhibition, which was first shown in Philadelphia under the patronage of Ambassadors Troyanovsky and Bullitt, has since been traveling in America under the auspices of the American Russian Institute and the College Art Association. Hailed by all critics as one of the most important national contributions to art of the 20th century, it will open in Kansas City at the Gallery on Sunday, January 5th.

There has been a widespread interest all over the world in the political and social upheavals in Russia since the World War, and there has been prevalent also, the erroneous idea that the arts and culture in general had been ignored in the new program. It was to combat this misconception and to show that a new and truly national art was emerging in Russia, that this group was gathered together. In sending it to America, there was no thought of propaganda, but merely a desire to show that this new art is of the people and a definite reflection of a vast nation at work and at play.

To the visitor who sees these paintings for the first time, the surprise will be great that so radiant, so colourful and so happy an art could have emerged from the turmoil of war and revolution. Christian Brinton, in his foreword to the catalogue, likens it to the sun-bathed Impressionist movement in France which developed during the war-wracked year of 1870. Surprise too will be felt that this new art owes so little to the various "isms" of the 20th century, Cubism, Expressionism, Surrealism. Before the World War, Russia was as familiar with these movements as was the rest of the world, but the younger generation, seeking for a more national expression and a new direction, turned, if we must designate this direction, to realism. It is then to "the living content of normal existence in USSR" that the younger artist has turned, not to abstractions or to revolutionary themes.

There is every justification for the national art of Russia to follow the line of realism. Realism was the chief characteristic of both painting and literature in pre-war Russia, but today it is not that of pessimism or deep-rooted disillusion, but rather a courageous socialist realism that is marked by sheer optimism.

The personalities of the individual artists are as interesting as their work. The average age of the painters is in the early thirties, and we feel the enthusiasm and belief of youth. One of the most outstanding is Peter Vladimirovitch Williams, of mixed Anglo-Welsh and Russian ancestry. His "Portrait of a Stage Director" is a fine, straight-forward character study, as is his "Portrait of Director Aleksandrov", whose moving pictures are well-known. Aleksandr Deyneka, who is devoting much of his time at present to murals, is represented by "Rest", an unpretentious double portrait study, with a colourful foreground of brilliant flowers. "Farm Woman and Son" by Evgeny Katzman shows two tillers of the soil, but they are touched with a dignity and alertness which is common with the new Soviet peasant. "Red Sailors' Swimming Contest" by Viktor Midler is a beautiful pattern of design

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while the more formalized composition of Shevchenko's "Fruit Seller" recalls the repose of our own Maurice Stern.

There has already been some opportunity to see Soviet graphic art in America, and again, one will be interested by the fact that much of the output of Russian printmaker and wood cutter is devoted to the illustration of translations of foreign authors, such as Longfellow, Dickens, Heine, and even Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

We in America feel that at last our artists are developing a national art, in an American idiom. It will be interesting by means of this exhibition, to compare the results with those that are being accomplished in Soviet Russia, where, as had been the case with us, too often our art had been a derivative one.

EXHIBITION OF SILK DESIGNS: Gallery XIII will be hung with a series of designs for printing and weaving silk during the week of January 12-19.

These designs were originally entered in a contest in New York City, for awards offered by the International Silk Guild. They represent the work of textile design students in Girl's Commercial, Washington Irving and Straubemuller Textile High Schools and are circulated by the American Federation of Art.

Many of these designs have already been manufactured and the silks are being used by internationally known fashion and interior designers.

MASTERPIECES OF THE WEEK: For the week of January 5th, a new acquisition, "The Stigmatization of Saint Francis", attributed to Don Lorenzo Monaco, 15th century Florentine artist, will be featured as the Masterpiece of the Week.

One of the three paintings acquired by the Director this summer in Europe, it is a most important addition to the collection of Primitives. Don Lorenzo Monaco was a reactionary painter closely allied to Fra Angelico, who painted small religious panels that are marked with a sincerity and fervor which was at variance with the paganism of the new Renaissance. Purchased from Langton Douglas, the noted authority on Italian Painting, it has a simple charm that recalls the work of Giotto.

The Wednesday evening lecture for January 8th will be given by Otto Wittmann, Jr., who will speak on "Early Italian Renaissance Painting". The lecture will be built about this new acquisition.

In connection with the Exhibition of Soviet Painting, the Masterpiece of the Week for January 12th will be an early Russian Painting of "Two Saints". Part of the collection presented to the Gallery by Mrs. Jacob Leander Loose, it formed a door in the iconostasis of an imperial church. In the Greek Orthodox Church, the Iconostasis is a screen that encloses the sanctuary and entry is made by three doors. This particular one was used only when the Czar himself was attending services.

The lecture for Wednesday Evening, January 15th, will be given by the Director, Mr. Gardner, who will talk on Russian Painting. The background of this art will be given, but the main part of the lecture will be devoted to the modern paintings and graphic art in the Soviet Painting Loan Exhibition.

GALLERY CHANGES: A number of changes have been made in the painting galleries. The Veronese "Christ and the Centurion", which emerges for the first time after its cleaning in all its beauty of colour, has been hung on the East Wall of Gallery III where it receives a finer light and where a greater distance is afforded to view the entire composition.

Both the "View of Malnate" by Luigi Lucioni and "The Dead Pheasant" by Henry Varnum Poor have been hung in Gallery XXX. Their addition to the permanent collection gives us fine representation in the contemporary American school.

The two later landscapes by Corot have been rehung after a careful cleaning by M. Rougeron, and we see them for the first time with their subtle and exquisite colour for which the artist was so justly famous. Particularly beautiful now is the distant background in "The Villa of the Parasol Pine" and the sky of "The Willow Grove". So high in tonality have they become, that they seem to belong with the Impressionists rather than with the Barbizon School.

The skirt of the "Saint Lawrence" by Alonso Cano has been cleaned of its disturbing red spot. The restorer tells us that this red was human blood that was placed there by some fanatical Spaniard. Religious ecstasy often moved the fervent to daub Spanish paintings thus, during the mystical rites of some of the brotherhoods.

COMMENDATION: Mr. Henry W. Kent, Secretary of the Metropolitan Museum where our Hubert Robert is now on loan, writes that he feels it is the most beautiful picture in the exhibition. This is high praise when we take into consideration that the Louvre has lent a half dozen of its French 18th century masterpieces to the exhibition.

LONDON CHINESE EXHIBITION: Laurence Sickman, Curator of Oriental Art, sailed December 26th for London to visit the great Chinese Show now being held at Burlington House. His first lecture on his return after the first of February will be devoted to the Exhibition there.

Our Chinese objects lent to this show are continually being featured in English publications and are receiving commendation from all the experts. The London Illustrated News, The Spectator, and the London Mercury have already carried illustrations and articles on the treasures that we have lent.

VISITORS: Mrs. Dagny Carter of Peiping, author of a number of books on China, spent a day at the Gallery recently on her way to the London Show. She commended particularly the Chinese section of the Gallery.

MARIONETTES: On Saturday Afternoon, December 28th, the Bushong Marionettes of Lawrence, gave a performance in the Atkins Auditorium of "Puss-in-Boots". Boys and girls from the various Childrens' Homes in Kansas City were our special guests and they were brought to the Gallery through the generosity of the Yellow and Terminal Cab Companies and a group of Friends of the Gallery.

LECTURE SCHEDULE

Gallery Tours -	Dec. 31 - Henry Varnum Poor	Mr. Gardner
Jan. 1 - 17	Jan. 1 - No tour - Gallery open 2 to 6 p.m.	
at 2 P.M. No	without admission charge	
charge to join	Jan. 2 - Chinese Textiles	Miss Hughes
them.	Jan. 3 - English and French Ptg.	Mr. Freeman
	Jan. 7 - Lorenzo Monaco	Mr. Wittmann
	Jan. 8 - Classical Art	Mr. Freeman
	Jan. 9 - Chinese Bronzes and	Miss Hughes
	Painting	
	Jan. 10- Prints	Mr. Wittman
	Jan. 14 - Russian Icon	Mr. Gardner
	Jan. 15 - Near Eastern Art	Miss Hughes
	Jan. 16 - Chinese Sculpture and	Miss Hughes
	Temple	
	Jan. 17 - Italian and Spanish Ptg.	Mr. Freeman
Evening lectures -	Jan. 8 - Early Renaissance Painting -	
8 p.m. in Atkins	Mr. Otto Wittman, Jr.	
Auditorium. No	Jan. 15- Russian Painting -	Mr. Paul Gardner
admission charge		